

PHILOSOPHY AND CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE ACCORDING TO AL-ZARNUJI'S EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT

Khairul Nizam bin Zainal Badri
Pusat Pengajian Al Mansoorah, Puchong, Selangor, Malaysia
knizamzb@almansoorah.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Imam Al-Zarnuji's book entitled Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim is no stranger to students in traditional educational institutions. The emphasis on manners and ethics in the process of teaching and learning as found in this book has given a tremendous influence to the residents of the hut in an effort to develop a noble personality. This book is unique because its debate is not only focused on manners and ethics that serve as an interface to the citizens of the traditional school among themselves and the surrounding community; but also covers the philosophy of knowledge that should be studied in its larger theme of discussion. This study seeks to examine the philosophy of knowledge contained in the book that is often studied by the residents of pondok by using a library approach based on qualitative methodology. The results of the study found that Al-Zarnuji's philosophy of knowledge has the influence of idealism that emphasizes the ability to think and a positive attitude to succeed. In conclusion, idealism has great implications in the field of education as it builds qualities from a spiritual point of view in human beings. Idealism not only increases human awareness of the responsibilities that need to be carried out based on an understanding of God, but also encourages the execution of doing good because every act gets a just reward from God.

Keywords: Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim, philosophy of knowledge, monotheism, positive, education

ABSTRAK

Kitab Imam Al-Zarnuji yang berjudul Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim sudah tidak asing lagi bagi siswa di lembaga pendidikan tradisional. Penekanan sopan santun dan etika dalam proses belajar mengajar seperti yang terdapat dalam kitab ini telah memberikan pengaruh yang luar biasa bagi penghuni pondok dalam upaya mengembangkan kepribadian yang luhur. Buku ini unik karena perdebatannya tidak hanya terfokus pada tata krama dan etika yang menjadi penghubung warga mazhab antara mereka sendiri dan masyarakat sekitar; tetapi juga mencakup filsafat pengetahuan yang harus dipelajari dalam tema diskusi yang lebih besar. Kajian ini berupaya mengkaji filosofi ilmu yang terkandung dalam kitab yang sering dipelajari oleh warga pondok ini dengan

menggunakan pendekatan perpustakaan berdasarkan metodologi kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa filsafat ilmu Al-Zarnuji memiliki pengaruh idealisme yang menekankan pada kemampuan berpikir dan sikap positif untuk berhasil. Kesimpulannya, idealisme memiliki implikasi besar dalam bidang pendidikan karena ia membangun kualitas dari sudut pandang spiritual dalam diri manusia. Idealisme tidak hanya meningkatkan kesadaran manusia akan tanggung jawab yang perlu dilaksanakan berdasarkan pemahaman tentang Tuhan, tetapi juga mendorong pelaksanaan perbuatan baik karena setiap tindakan mendapat balasan yang adil dari Tuhan.

Kata kunci: Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim, filsafat pengetahuan, tauhid, positif, pendidikan

INTRODUCTION

Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim composed by Imam Al-Zarnuji has a great influence in traditional educational institutions. This book is often used as a reference especially about the manners in learning, and the stages in learning. In addition, this book is also used as a guide for educators and students in the process of teaching and learning. The most important concept of education highlighted in the book is the ethical approach, and educational procedures (Mahsun & Maulidina, 2019).

Ironically, this field is relatively little given attention in contemporary education because the objectives of this modern education are more focused on cognitive and psychomotor development, rather than affective. As a result, students have exceptional intelligence and skills; but lacks sensitivity to courtesy, ethical association, and a caring or considerate attitude toward others. This condition also leads to misconduct, and immoral behavior; because intellect and strength are not channeled into right conduct and thought. The intellect is only wise in lessons but cannot distinguish between the right and the wrong, such as degrading the dignity of the teacher by insulting the teacher. While force is used to realize an unhealthy mind, by committing harmful acts, such as driving a vehicle at a speed that endangers lives and others (Majed, 2021).

For that reason, traditional educational institutions pay close attention to moral development starting from an early stage. If morality is not curbed from the beginning, then

students will be vulnerable to symptoms of moral decline. The most basic thing revealed to students is to behave towards Allah SWT. This emphasis on morality to God will encourage students to know the religion as a whole, and the role that must be performed such as behaving to the Prophet SAW, behaving to other human beings, and behaving to other creatures of Allah SWT (Syakir, 2017: 7-8).

The great influence of this book in traditional educational institutions has caused it to be often the object of study, to find out the ethical and moral thinking contained in it. In addition to ethics and morals, there are also other themes in the field of education that can be explored in the book. In this study, focus is given to Al-Zarnuji's philosophy of knowledge based on his educational thinking. This field is considered very important because it has to do with religion, spirituality and morality which is the basis of practice in education (Rusdi, 2013).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method by choosing a literature approach to collect data. By using this approach, data in the form of documents such as journals, books and articles can be collected as much as possible. The use of qualitative descriptive methods is very useful to parse the debate in more detail, by presenting relevant theories that are further deduced on the symptoms to be studied, developed hypotheses and operationalize concepts. This method is also important in an effort to emphasize the position of research so that theories and concepts on the aspects studied can be explained and formulated (Ibrahim, 2015: 37-39).

The main source used in this research is the writings of Al-Zarnuji entitled *Ta'alim Al-Muta'allim Tariq Al-Ta'alum*. However, the main reference used as a research guide is the most recent translation that has been published by Pustaka Ilmuwan in 2020, which is entitled *Cahaya Bagi Penuntut Ilmu*. From these main sources, Al-Zarnuji's views are scrutinized and extracted according to the study subject.

DISCUSSION

Philosophy of Knowledge

Al-Zarnuji emphasizes on religious sciences because these sciences are very useful in the whole of life in every situation. These sciences are able to save people from disbelief, or fall into the valley of sin and vice. The science of monotheism and the science of fiqh are the most necessary sciences in daily life. The law of learning this science is obligatory for every Muslim (Az-Zarnuji, No Year: 1).

From a technical point of view, something is said to be knowledge if it leads to truth. An attribute that allows a person to know the truth perfectly, is to refer to the guidance or decoration presented by Allah SWT to His servants who have received priority and glory (Alfiyah, 2013).

According to Al-Zarnuji, science needs to be seen from the side of its origin and usefulness which is pragmatic, which is loaded with moral values. The nature of knowledge is said to be pragmatic because it is bound by the values of truth and purity. This is because true knowledge comes from the Almighty God. Knowledge is a gift of God, which is sacred and bestows divine light on its recipients (Alfiyah, 2013).

The Concept of Education

In the context of education, education has two goals; first, for the purpose of the hereafter where one seeks knowledge with the hope of Allah SWT, seeks happiness in the hereafter by eliminating ignorance in oneself or helping to correct the views of others, revive the religion, and preserve Islam; and secondly, for the purpose of the world where one acquires knowledge in order to gain the power to carry out the commands of Allah, uphold the truth and lead society to the path of Allah SWT.

Thus the intention of seeking knowledge must be clear where learning should not be intended to seek influence, or to gain worldly pleasures, or to gain certain honors and positions. Based on this statement, it can be seen that the purpose of ideal and practical education must

include a dimension that contains Islamic ideal values that can improve well-being in the world, and a dimension that contains spiritual values that serve to encourage the soul to achieve happiness in the hereafter.

Both of these dimensions are very important to human beings because they serve to enlighten the soul, and increase human consciousness; so as not to be shackled by the materialistic chains of life in the world. Essentially, these two dimensions are interconnected with each other containing values that can integrate practicality referring to the life of the world and ideals referring to the afterlife (Wahyuddin, 2018).

Education according to Al-Zarnuji involves the process of nurturing the soul in an effort to understand the meaning of something as an effort to form noble morals to draw closer to God in order to achieve safety in this world and in the hereafter. Al-Zarnuji's concept of learning emphasizes moral requirements as the main basis, where teachers and students must uphold each other's ethics without killing creativity and the dynamics of teaching and learning. The pattern of teacher-student relationship is reciprocal that places teachers and students in accordance with their respective positions, so that optimal education is achieved, so that a person with noble morals is formed as the end product (Baharuddin & Wahyuni, 2007: 55-56).

The concept of intelligence

The intelligence possessed by a person is the main capital in attaining knowledge and success in life. Thus, intelligence is a fundamental thing that is the main condition in learning. On the relationship between intelligence and the acquisition of knowledge, Al-Zarnuji who quoted the speech of Saiyiduna Ali bin Abi Talib with its meaning; Know that you will not acquire knowledge except with the supply of six things; intelligent, enthusiastic, patient, well - supplied, teacher guidance, and a long time. This statement clearly shows that Al-Zarnuji values the role of intelligence as the main condition for acquiring knowledge (Kambali, 2015).

According to Al-Zarnuji, a person is unlikely to acquire knowledge if it is not accompanied by intelligence. Intelligence involves the process of empowering the potential of the intellect and ambition. The ideals are like the wings of a bird used to fly high. A person's position depends on his ambitions. For a person with a big soul, no matter how high the challenge, he will still face it. Thus, the greater one's ambition for knowledge, the higher his rank, and his glory in the sight of God. So it is not surprising when it is said that the position of the knowledgeable person is much higher than that of kings and commanders (Kambali, 2015).

Intelligence also includes the power of thinking which consists of a combination of creativity and logic. According to Al-Zarnuji, jurists as scholars must think first, before opening the talk. In addition to being careful before issuing an opinion, thinking also shows the breadth of one's knowledge. The sign of a person having intelligence, as quoted in his view from Ibn Abbas ra is by asking a lot, and a heart that is always thinking (Kambali, 2015).

Compared to the theory of multiple intelligences introduced by Howard Gardner in 1983, the foundation to the formation of intelligence lies in experience. As for Al-Zarnuji, the basis for the formation of intelligence is based on knowledge and understanding of God. The theory of multiple intelligences introduced by Gardner is more towards life management, while Al-Zarnuji emphasizes efforts to translate intelligence into a form of responsibility that must be fulfilled by human beings as servants and beings entrusted by God to develop worldly and hereafter well-being (Gardner, 2003).

Idealism in Education

Idealism is said to have been introduced by a Greek thinker named Plato in the 4th century BC. Plato argued that world phenomena can be known by contemplating them in an ideal form or abstract essence. Such knowledge can be achieved with the rational mind rather than the senses or understanding. Plato developed a philosophical system around the fundamental notion

that the things of this world are shadows or reflections of their ideal forms that exist in a transcendent realm beyond time and space. According to Plato, it is the transcendent realm that should be considered the real world because the forms that encompass it are perfect and eternal, not subject to change, decay, or limitations as occurs in the real world (Gallagher, 2010).

This philosophy is considered important in education because it highlights attempts to solve logical problems and other problems involved in relating details to universal issues. For example, a thing is said to be good if the perpetrator is good. So the whole good thing is in the concept of goodness. This is because every good thing is in fact a shadow of goodness. For that reason this philosophy is said to be closely related to the metaphysical or religious dimension. Thus, this philosophy developed rapidly because of the philosophy of idealism which was closely related to the teachings of religion, which paid attention to the spiritual and moral aspects; two characteristics that are innate in human beings (Gallagher, 2010).

In the context of educational philosophy, idealism is a set of philosophical systems in which ideas are the principles and foundations for well-being and knowledge. Through this philosophy, belief is placed on ethical and moral values. By adhering to this belief, then justice and goodness can be implemented at the individual and community level (Knight, 2004: 48-52).

The key to understanding the epistemology of idealism lies in the metaphysical dimension. When idealism emphasizes reality in the world of ideas, mind and soul, then it can be seen that the theory of knowing is essentially a mental exploration in perceiving ideas, thoughts and concepts. In the view of idealism, knowing reality is not through an experience of seeing, hearing or feeling; but more as an act of mastering an idea and preserving it in the mind (Knight, 2004: 48-52).

In idealism, the process of knowing can be done by recognizing or recalling hidden ideas that have been formed and already exist in the mind. By looking back, the human mind can

discover ideas about the macro-cosmics. So, basically knowing that is through the process of recognizing or remembering, calling and rethinking the hidden or stored ideas that actually already exist in the mind. What will be known is already in the mind. Thus, truth according to idealism has been in the world of ideas and notions. In the ideology of idealism, the absolute intellect present in oneself constantly enhances the power of thought. The development of the truth system is based on logical consistency. A thing is said to be true if it is in line with the reality of the universe. Everything that is inconsistent with the ideal structure of the universe should be rejected because it is considered to be against logic. Thus, the means used to obtain the truth are not empirical in nature. Idealists believe in intuition, revelation and rationality in gaining and developing knowledge. These methodologies are considered the most accurate in embracing the truths that underlie the philosophy of education (Rusdi, 2013).

The axiology of idealism is strongly rooted in its metaphysical ways. This universe can be thought of and contemplated in macro-cosmic and micro-cosmic frameworks. From this point of view, macro-cosmics is viewed as the root of the Absolute Being. The earth and sensory experiences are seen as shadows of the Absolute Being. In such a conception, the ethical and aesthetic criteria of goodness and convenience are beyond the human self, are in the fact of the reality of truth itself and are based on eternal principles (Knight, 2004: 53).

In the view of idealism, ethical life can be thought of as a life lived in harmony with nature. If the Absolute Being is seen as macro-cosmic, then the human self can be identified as micro-cosmic. Within that framework, the role of the individual can be maximized in order to mimic the role of the Absolute Being which refers to His Nature. Absolute Existence is formulated as the Most, Perfect Existence in Everything including morals. If the Absolute Existence is seen as the last thing, and the most ethical of all things, then the behavior of the human self lies in its imitation of the Absolute Existence, so that man also becomes moral (Knight, 2004: 53-54).

The above evidence shows that the value of goodness on the human side is by reference to the Absolute Existence. When man is able to align himself and is able to enable himself to imitate the Absolute Being which is the source to morals and ethics, then at that point he has acquired an ethical life.

Idealism according to Al-Zarnuji

The philosophy of idealism from Al-Zarnuji's point of view can be seen in two aspects. First, idealism about reality where reality is the knowledge of God. This reality is present in the form of inspiration and vision that combines the functions of the mind and heart. The reality on the side of Al-Zarnuji is referring to Allah SWT absolutely. Thus, idealism about reality in fact refers to the religious knowledge where monotheism is the essence of life. Second, the idealism of immortality where the essential immortality is retribution in the Hereafter which refers to heaven and hell. Thus, education according to Al-Zarnuji is to acquire knowledge that can bring eternal happiness which refers to the state of the Hereafter (Haroen, 2014).

In the context of education, the purpose of acquiring knowledge is to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT, eliminate ignorance, and convey the truth and preserve religious teachings. Epistemology according to Al-Zarnuji is by emphasizing knowledge to know God, obey His commandments and benefit individuals and society (Haroen, 2014).

To acquire knowledge, one needs to dig the source of naqliyyah because it is the most important source of knowledge. The source of naqliyyah is referring to knowledge based on revelation. The second source of knowledge is aqliyyah which refers to the use of the mind. This method is very important because it develops human potential. This is because the mind combines reflection and contemplation so as to produce inspiration or vision that is able to increase piety in a person (Haroen, 2014).

Knowledge according to Al-Zarnuji consists of three parts. First, knowledge of the properties that describe the object of discussion is abstract so that the object is clearly appropriate as it is. For example, the correct understanding of the relationship between

asceticism and suspicion where asceticism is to keep oneself from things those are suspicious. Asceticism does not mean that one has to live in poverty because that is a wrong concept. This means that knowledge refers to the mind that seeks to conceptualize the object of discussion accurately. Second, the knowledge possessed by human beings in general that corresponds to the concept of education. For example, knowledge of prayer and everything related to it such as the pillars and legal conditions. Third, the knowledge of the explanation of something, such as the knowledge of noble and reprehensible morals. Knowledge of admirable morals must be known and learned to increase piety to God (Az-Zarnuji B., 2020: 11-20).

Thus, the concept of knowledge according to Al-Zarnuji consists of two main foundations; first, knowledge elevates man in the sight of God; and secondly, knowledge saves human life in this world and in the hereafter. Thus, knowledge according to Al-Zarnuji is not only idealistic but also pragmatic because the outcome to the life of the world which refers to the life in the Hereafter should be given full attention. It is a loss to human beings when they only focus on the life of the world but ignore the eternal life (Az-Zarnuji B., 2020: 72-75).

Idealism from an axiological point of view according to Al-Zarnuji is a very unique dimension to be explored. This is because ideal learning is rooted in sincere intentions. Good intentions will produce good achievement in lessons because the whole learning process is blessed by God. Good intentions will benefit individuals, institutions and the surrounding community. This is because good intentions will publish good thoughts and behaviors. Noble values will be realized through pure intentions (Az-Zarnuji B., 2020: 21-28).

Another important point emphasized by Al-Zarnuji is to avoid debate and hostility. Argumentative or hostile attitudes not only waste time but also at the same time take away the blessings of knowledge. It is better if one pays attention to the expansion of one's potential than to engage in debates or hostilities that do not bring any benefit. Focusing on the pursuit of knowledge is far more beneficial than arguing or being hostile with the aim of gaining glory or demeaning others (Az-Zarnuji B., 2020: 111-118).

Implications of Idealism in Education

The relationship between philosophy and education is a harmonious one, which does not exist by chance. This is because both have the same propensity for debate; such as the fact of knowledge, the acquisition of knowledge, and the value of knowledge.

In the context of idealism, ontology states that statements and truths are in fact ideas or things that have a spiritual quality. Therefore, the first thing that needs to be surveyed in the protege is the understanding as a spiritual being who has a life of an ontological and idealistic nature. Thus, the philosophy of education in the mold of idealism is to guide students to become God's creatures with personality, morality and ambition.

The epistemological aspect in idealism refers to the acquisition of knowledge of an idealistic and spiritual nature that can guide human life to a more blessed life of God. Such knowledge is not solely tied to things of physics, but also needs to prioritize things of a metaphysical nature.

The axiological aspect in the bag of idealism is to place values on a plateau that is fixed, but idealistic. The meaning here is that students are not allowed by their teachers to be in a state of instability without a direction that is relative or temporary. Instead the pupils are consistently exposed to monotheistic awareness and the acquisition of true knowledge, and at the same time allow them to develop their potential through a keen mind in an effort to know the reality of divinity.

CONCLUSION

Although the book *Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim* written by Imam Al-Zarnuji is often referred to as a guide to manners and ethics when studying and teaching, but on the other hand it can be

observed that its content also discusses the philosophy of education. Uniquely in discussing the philosophy, the idealism triggered by Plato, a Greek thinker is also discussed in the book especially in matters related to the fact and value of knowledge.

Idealism on the part of Al-Zarnuji is very interesting to study because it emphasizes the concept of positive psychology, where students are encouraged to think and develop their potential in the field of knowledge. In addition, it also emphasizes the importance of monotheistic awareness in oneself because such awareness is able to generate an optimistic, confident, and determined attitude to go through life.

Intention is an element that Al-Zarnuji pays close attention to because it affects the outcome. For example, good intentions will produce good thoughts and behaviors. On the other hand bad intentions will give birth to thoughts and behaviors that can be detrimental to self and others. In the context of education, intention is a very ideal encouragement to children to pursue learning in earnest because its benefits are not only obtained in this world but also in the hereafter. In the world, his knowledge is disseminated for the use of society. As for the hereafter, he gets glory in the side of Allah SWT.

Overall, idealism from the side of Al-Zarnuji has a great impact in the world of education as it encourages a positive attitude among students to work hard in lessons and do good deeds because every good effort and good deeds done will be rewarded with glory by Allah SWT. Idealism according to Al-Zarnuji is able to develop human potential both in terms of thought and behavior.

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